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Top Secret



Increasing Hostility Between India and Bangladesh and the Possibility of Indian Military Intervention

NSA, DIA reviews
completed

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INTELLIGENCE ALERT MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Increasing Tension Between India and Bangladesh and Possibility of Indian Military Intervention

1. Recent events in Bangladesh, in particular the wounding of the Indian High Commissioner, possibly by a radical group strongly opposed to the present Bangladesh government, have escalated tensions between New Delhi and Dacca. This in turn has increased the possibility of eventual Indian military intervention in Bangladesh.

2. There continues to be no evidence that Indian military intervention is imminent. In the absence of increased harassment of Indian nationals, large-scale communal strife, or an exodus of refugees -- all of which would intensify Indian concerns -- a deliberate Indian move still appears unlikely. The government of Bangladesh is aware of these concerns and has taken positive steps to allay them. Nevertheless, given the instability of the government in Dacca it is impossible to estimate whether or when any of these developments will occur. Additionally, given the emotional impact of such events, the pressures within India to act might increase markedly on short notice.

3. Indian forces are in position to attack the smaller nation

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4. Other recent developments include:

-- Increasingly shrill criticism of recent events in Dacca by the censored Indian press. The press has appeared to overplay the threat to

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[redacted]

internal stability in Bangladesh while emphasizing the dangers faced by Indian nationals and the Hindu minority.

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-- A report in New Delhi, denied in Dacca [redacted]

[redacted] that small groups of Hindus have recently crossed the border into India, following alleged harassment by Bangladesh's Muslim majority.

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-- An Indian report, again denied in Dacca, that the government of Bangladesh is about to proclaim itself an "Islamic republic."

-- Recent speeches by Bangladesh leaders, including strongman General Zia ur Rahman, complaining that external forces -- a clear reference to India -- are behind Bangladesh's problems.

-- A growing conviction on the part of some Indian officials that the government in Dacca is pro-Pakistani and pro-Chinese as well as anti-Indian.

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6. This memorandum has been coordinated among the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State.